



bay restoration commission

STEWARDS OF SANTA MONICA BAY

santa monica bay restoration commission / 320 west 4th street, ste 200; los angeles, california 90013
213/576-6615 phone / 213/576-6646 fax / santamonicabay.org

July 18, 2008

Chairwoman Golding
Marine Life Protection Act Initiative
c/o California Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Nomination of Lia Protopapadakis to the Regional Stakeholder Group

Dear Chairwoman Golding,

This letter is to nominate Lia Protopapadakis to the Regional Stakeholder Group. She represents the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission (SMBRC), a partnership of federal, state and local entities in the watershed of the Santa Monica Bay. I believe she and the SMBRC will bring valuable information and coalition-building expertise to the south coast regional stakeholder group and urge you to select her for this task.

Lia grew up in the Los Angeles area, has a bachelor's degree in Biology from the University of Southern California, and a Master's degree in Coastal Environmental Management from Duke University. She is the Marine Policy Specialist for the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation, the non-profit partner of the SMBRC. Her experience with controversial issues and ability to find common or neutral ground with a variety of interest groups was a primary reason we hired her. She came to the SMBRC from Washington DC, where her work for the US Congress involved mediating between the environmental community and ocean industry representatives to successfully craft ocean policy legislation. Before that, and while still a student at Duke, she participated in a tuna-tagging project where she got to know the local charter-boat captains, whom she later collaborated with in opposing a Navy proposal to build a sonar range under prime fishing grounds. Please see the attached document for specific information on how she meets each of the selection criteria.

Every habitat found in the south coast study area can be found in the Santa Monica Bay, including special features such as submarine canyons and deepwater rock banks. The Bay was designated as an estuary of national importance in 1988 under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's National Estuary Program (NEP), established by Congress in 1987 to improve the quality of such estuaries. The SMBRC is an independent organization authorized by the State of California to house the NEP. Under our purview are the Bay's entire 266 square miles of ocean, 55 miles of shoreline, and

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their role in hosting millions of public visitors each year. Ben actively participates and coordinates work for a variety of regional, multiagency programs including MARINe, the Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan for San Diego Bay, and Kelp Forest Monitoring program.

Through his work as a Scripps Oceanography diver, his education and current position with the National Park Service overseeing biological shoreline resources at Cabrillo National Monument, Ben is directly knowledgeable about the habitats in Southern California and would bring this knowledge to the group. He demonstrates the ability to balance local vs. regional interests daily in the administration of his duties within the Park Service, balancing local park needs within a regional and national context. Ben also has a large network of contacts from recreation fishing groups to academic institutions.

MARINe highly recommends Ben for the Stakeholders's group as he brings the energy, knowledge, Federal perspective and full commitment to the process.



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414 square miles of land draining into it. To fulfill our mission, we work collaboratively with our federal, state, and local partners to develop integrated solutions to the Bay's environmental problems, ranging from water quality and seafood contamination to habitat loss and species decline. The Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation raises and expends funds for research, education, planning, cleanup efforts, and other priorities identified by SMBRC. Species protection and habitat restoration are core to our mission and we are therefore very interested in the MLPA process. Please see the attached document for more information on the Commission and Foundation.

To ensure our decisions are based on science, SMBRC retains a technical advisory committee to develop and prioritize research agendas, oversee and implement key research projects, develop a Bay-wide comprehensive monitoring program, and provide technical guidance and feedback on the development of new environmental policies. This advisory committee is a rich source of information about the biology, ecology, and political geography of the Bay. It is Lia's responsibility to coordinate and direct the activities of this scientific advisory body. In this role she encourages the scientists to discuss their divergent ideas, synthesizes these into informative products, and solicits their feedback. As a facilitator in this role, Lia is cool-headed, organized, and effective. These personal characteristics will make her an ideal participant on the Regional Stakeholder Group.

The SMBRC is an important stakeholder to the MLPA process: our mission is to improve the health of the ocean nearest to the largest population center in California; our Governing Board is comprised of all the state and local agencies that have an impact on the bay; and we have been working on improving the health of the Santa Monica Bay since the first restoration plan was approved in 1995. Given the makeup of our Governing Board, it is easy to see why SMBRC does not easily fit into any one single-interest stakeholder group, such as fishermen or conservationists. Rather, we work with these groups and many others to forge collaborative and integrated solutions to problems facing the bay, including habitat restoration and water quality.

Because the Bay is an integral part of the Southern California Bight, we have a long history of collaborating with stakeholders throughout the study region. As a result, SMBRC has the knowledge base and regional perspective to assist in designing an MPA system for the entire South Coast region. One example of this is our recent work coordinating a bight-wide data gap analysis and data collection effort for the MLPA process. Furthermore, the SMBRC does not have established ideas regarding potential locations of MPAs in the Santa Monica Bay, but we do believe that MPAs are one of many important tools for protecting marine life and habitat and are committed to seeing a system of effective MPAs established in Southern California waters.

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We are very excited that the MLPA Initiative is underway in southern California. The SMBRC recognizes that what goes on in the rest of the region and the state ultimately affects the Santa Monica Bay and we are able and willing to think regionally in order to develop a system of MPAs that will benefit the entire region and State. We thank you for this opportunity to participate in the MLPA process and fervently hope that you select Lia to participate on the Regional Stakeholder Group for the south coast study area.

Sincerely,

Shelley Luce
Executive Director
Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission

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Attachment

Nominee: Lia Protopapadakis

Contact Info:

Los Angeles, CA 90045

How Lia and the SMBRC meet EACH of the selection criteria

1) Able to bring first-hand knowledge and perspective to bear on the marine resources of the MLPA South Coast Study Region.

- Lia has scientific and professional experience in study region. As an undergrad at USC, she spent a semester at their marine lab on Catalina Island. She has studied marine biology, conservation, marine mammals and the natural history of California. Her undergraduate thesis looked at kelp, urchin, and invasive seaweed feeding dynamics on Catalina Island and her Master's thesis evaluated ecosystem-based fisheries management of bigeye and yellowfin tuna in Hawaii. Lia also worked as an intern with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and the National Marine Fisheries Service in Long Beach, where she conducted economic research on California's tuna fisheries.
- Lia has lived in the Los Angeles area for 18 years. After graduating from college, she participated in Sea Divers, one of the few advanced SCUBA diving clubs in southern California and volunteered as a research diver for the Catalina Conservancy divers. She is an all around water-woman and participates in a variety of consumptive and non-consumptive ocean dependent activities, including surfing, recreational and research scuba diving, lobster diving, and kayak fishing. Her participation in these activities have taken her up and down the coast from Santa Barbara to San Diego and into Baja California, giving her firsthand knowledge of the study area, a regional frame of reference, and a balanced perspective on ocean use.
- Lia is actively working on marine regulatory processes and monitoring projects in southern California, including once-through cooling, ocean energy development, the marine life protection act, fishery management, and rocky reef monitoring.
- Lia has access to the extensive body of knowledge about the entire bight, its resources, and the people living along the coast, through the Technical Advisory Committee, their colleagues, and SMBRC's collaboration on bight-wide monitoring projects.
- Lia also has practical experience with the most up-to-date GIS software and mapping techniques, gained from coursework at Duke University.

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2) Able to balance a south coast regional perspective with localized knowledge.

- As stated earlier, Lia's recreational use of the entire region gives her a regional perspective and will allow her to balance this perspective with the localized knowledge of the organization she represents.
- In addition, SMBRC recognizes that what goes on in the rest of the region and the state ultimately affects the Santa Monica Bay. As such, SMBRC is eager to help develop a system of MPAs for the benefit of the entire region and State.

3) Willing to express fundamental interests (as opposed to fixed positions) and to clearly convey the interests of one or more stakeholder groups, and 4) Capable of working collaboratively, seeking to integrate the interests of the full range of constituencies.

- Prior to joining the SMBRC, Lia was Congressman Sam Farr's primary advisor on all ocean and coastal policy issues. In this position she gained experience working collaboratively, integrating the interests of a diverse range of stakeholders, conveying her boss's fundamental interests, and getting others to focus on their fundamental interests instead of outcomes.
- It is also the position of the SMBRC to work collaboratively and make decisions based on science not fixed positions.

5) Able to access and use an effective communication network to reach stakeholders not attending the public meetings.

- Lia will use SMBRC's extensive communication network and her own personal and professional contacts to reach stakeholders not attending public meetings. [details below]

6) Committed to completing all aspects of the charge of the regional stakeholder group.

- Lia has expressed to me her excitement about the marine life protection act process and her desire to actively participate in the process and be involved in designing the system of MPAs. She and the SMBRC understand the intense time commitment involved and is willing to see this commitment through to the end.

Past involvement in the MLPA or similar collaborative public process

- As the coordinator of the SMBRC's MPA Technical Advisory Subcommittee, Lia has been working with MLPA Initiative staff to provide relevant information about the south coast study area, in anticipation of the MLPA process coming to southern California.
- In this capacity Lia has also attended public meetings of the north central coast's scientific advisory team and blue ribbon task force.
- Prior to her work with SMBRC, she was a Knauss Sea Grant Fellow in the office of Congressman Sam Farr (D-CA-Monterey). She served as his primary advisory





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on ocean policy. In this role, she conducted stakeholder outreach and coalition building to re-write his major piece of ocean legislation, Oceans-21. Due in large part to her efforts to incorporate the fundamental interests of a wider variety of stakeholders, the bill passed the House Natural Resources subcommittee earlier this year.

- She gained additional experience with collaborative public processes in graduate school, where she facilitated a public meeting to develop solutions for a perceived problem of overcrowding in the computer labs.

Organizations and Individuals with which the nominee will communicate

- Lia will make presentations to the 34-member Governing Board of the SMBRC at their regularly-scheduled public meetings. The Governing Board includes local elected officials; federal, state and local public agency officials; and representatives from the business and environmental communities. For more information please visit our website: www.santamonicabay.org.
- Lia will give updates to the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation's Board of Directors during their regularly-scheduled board meetings. The Board of Directors is comprised of representatives from the stakeholder organizations that make up the Santa Monica Bay Watershed Council, the previous governing board and now an advisory body to the SMBRC)
- Lia will also communicate with the 9-member technical advisory committee and 7 member MPA technical advisory committee, which consist of scientists and technical professionals with expertise in marine and watershed ecology from government agencies, universities, and research institutions.
- Finally, Lia has established a relationship with the Reserve Manager for the Tijuana River National Estuary Research Reserve and will communicate regularly with him. The Tijuana River Reserve is located in a highly urbanized environment surrounded by the growing cities of Tijuana, Imperial Beach and San Diego. Part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Estuary Research Reserve system, it was established for long-term research, education and stewardship. Like the National Estuary Program, this one is also a federal, state, and local partnership to protect habitat and wildlife.

Specific communication and outreach mechanisms

- Lia will make presentations and lead discussions about the MPA process at SMBRC's bi-monthly Governing Board meetings and concurrent Foundation meetings, at the quarterly technical advisory committee meetings, and at the monthly meetings of the MPA technical advisory committee.
- Lia has access to the Governing Board members' constituencies through their email lists and at constituent outreach events, where Lia will conduct workshops to convey information and receive input.

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- The SMBRC will post updates about the MLPA process on our website and in Baywire, SMBRC's electronic newsletter with a distribution list of about 300.
- Through SMBRC's contacts bight-wide, Lia will be able to communicate with other groups including United Anglers, the Keeper network, Heal the Bay, the Ocean Conservancy, university professors, SCCWRP, SCCOOS, Sea Grant, and elected officials.
- Updates and announcements about the MLPA process will be spread through the outreach activities of SMBRC's Boater Education Program. These activities include the Changing Tide, a quarterly newsletter devoted to clean boating issues published in conjunction with the California Clean Boating Network; tabling at boat shows; dock-walking; and giving presentations to marinas and yacht clubs.
- In addition, Lia will confer regularly with the Tijuana Slough National Estuary Research Reserve to provide updates and gather their feedback throughout the south coast MLPA process.

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